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ABSTRACT

In October 1986, the Tennessee State Board of Education adopted nine principles setting forth a framework for the design of an improved teacher education system in Tennessee and identifying major areas of responsibility for higher education institutions, local school systems, and the state. The principles include: (1) liberal arts preparation; (2) responsibility for designing programs of study for teachers; (3) professional education; (4) induction into the profession; (5) waivers and permits; (6) program approval; (7) assessment of teacher candidates; (8) local system evaluation of beginning teachers; and (9) research and inquiry to improve teaching, teacher education, and school leadership. The Advisory Council on Teacher Education and Certification was given the responsibility of recommending an improved teacher education system consistent with the nine principles. This paper assesses the current status of each of the nine principles and offers recommendations for continuing improvement. The document concludes with a summary of recommendations, additional issues to be addressed by the Advisory Council on Teacher Education and Certification, and a list of the Advisory Council members. (LL)

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ED 369 731

TENNESSEE'S

TEACHER EDUCATION POLICY:

A MID-COURSE ASSESSMENT

November 19, 1993

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Advisory Council on Teacher Education and Certification

State Board of Education

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TEACHER EDUCATION POLICY
A MID-COURSE ASSESSMENT

In October 1986, the State Board of Education adopted nine principles setting forth a framework for the design of an improved teacher education system in Tennessee and identifying major areas of responsibility for higher education institutions, local school systems, and the state. The Advisory Council on Teacher Education and Certification was given the responsibility of recommending an improved teacher education system consistent with the nine principles. The Advisory Council recommended a new policy which was approved by the Board in January 1988. Subsequently, standards and guidelines for each teaching area were recommended by the Advisory Council and approved by the Board.

As part of its continuing responsibility, the Advisory Council has prepared this assessment of its work regarding each of the nine principles and recommendations for continuing improvement. Further analysis of the impact of the Teacher Education Policy is scheduled for 1996-97, when all aspects of the new policy, standards, and guidelines will be in effect.

1. **Liberal Arts Preparation**

   Teachers should be as well educated as other arts and sciences graduates; their preparation should include a rigorous liberal arts core and an arts and sciences major (or the equivalent study at the advanced level).

   Current Status

   The new Teacher Education Policy and licensure standards require teacher candidates to have a general education core of approximately 50 percent of the curriculum and an academic major. Institutions of higher education have implemented new teacher education programs incorporating these features. Teacher candidates who entered preparation programs in Fall 1990 will complete programs approved under the new standards. Beginning in Fall 1994 all teacher candidates will be licensed under the new standards.

   Recommendation

   To determine changes in course taking, the Board should ask the Southern Regional Education Board to do a follow up study, similar to that undertaken in the early 80s, analyzing the transcripts of prospective teachers. In addition, the Board should request the Tennessee Board of Regents, the University of Tennessee, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, and the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities to review teacher preparation programs regarding course taking patterns and academic majors.

2. **Responsibility for designing programs of study for teachers**

   Institutions of higher education, including colleges or departments of education and colleges of arts and sciences, have the responsibility to design effective liberal arts and teacher education programs which equip teachers with the skills needed to achieve the objectives of the College Board's Educational EQuality Project.

Current Status

The new Teacher Education Policy and licensure standards provide for joint responsibility of faculties in education, arts and sciences, and other academic areas to develop effective programs of study. This is a departure from the old teacher licensure system in which the state specified course requirements. The Advisory Council developed statements of knowledge and skills - what teachers need to know and to be able to do - in each of the teaching endorsement areas. These statements are consistent with the national recommendations of the 1980s in the various teaching fields and with the publications by the College Board of what students need to know and to be able to do. Preliminary analysis by the State Department of Education indicates that an honest effort has been made by the higher education faculties to work collaboratively to design effective programs consistent with the knowledge and skills specified. (See additional discussion under principle #9).

Recommendation

The Advisory Council should periodically review the endorsement standards of various teaching subject areas to make sure they are consistent with new or emerging national standards.

3. **Professional Education**

Courses in pedagogy should incorporate recent research on teaching and learning including the competencies identified by the Better Schools Programs.

Current Status

Based upon recent research on teaching and learning, the new Teacher Education Policy provides for a focused professional education core. Most institutions have incorporated the current knowledge base into their programs in accordance with NCATE standards.

Both the policy and the licensure standards emphasize the need for collaboration between higher education faculty and K-12 educators in designing and implementing professional education experiences: admissions, practica, enhanced student teaching, and internships. Collaborative work requires commitment, trust, and sustained effort by both higher education and K-12 education. In many places this is working very well. In other places the effort is just beginning. Evidence should be collected regarding whether decisions are jointly made and whether higher education institutions and local school systems are working as a team. (See additional discussion under principle #9).

Since 1988, when the standards were adopted, several national efforts have begun to define the knowledge and skills required of beginning teachers. The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) has developed a draft statement of knowledge and skills needed by beginning teachers based upon the model developed by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards for experienced teachers. This draft is being circulated by the Council of Chief State School Officers. It appears that for the most part the current standards are congruent with those being circulated, but we are missing some of the new concepts.

Recommendation

The annual faculty involvement report submitted by each institution should emphasize collaborative activities with schools; institutions and schools should be encouraged to form partnerships for the preparation of teachers. Additionally, the Advisory Council should review the knowledge and skills in the professional education core to determine consistency with emerging national standards.

4. **Induction into the Profession**

Teacher education should include a one year internship developed jointly by the institutions of higher education and local school systems.

Current Status

While the principle calls for one year internships for all prospective teachers (a feature included in original recommendation of the Advisory Council), the Teacher Education Policy provides for either a one year internship or an enhanced student teaching semester followed by a Beginning Teacher Program (BTP). The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, has implemented the internship for all teacher candidates -- about 300 annually. Other colleges and universities (e.g. Memphis State University, Belmont University, Milligan College, and Vanderbilt University) have implemented both internships and enhanced student teaching. Implementation of enhanced student teaching (a full 15 weeks with placements at two different teaching levels) is occurring for the first time in 1993-94 at many of the other institutions.

While it is too early to evaluate which type of induction experience works best, interviews with superintendents, principals and mentor teachers indicate that candidates who serve as interns are better prepared to begin teaching as a result of the full year of on-the-job mentored experience. Graduates completing internships have job placement rates considerably higher than those completing student teaching. The internship also provides a powerful stimulus for collaboration; having the internship makes many other aspects of the policy work well. Some school systems recognize the advantages by providing stipends to interns; some schools provide stipends to three to five interns in lieu of one teaching position. In the hope of recruiting the new teachers the following year, some school systems provide stipends to interns in areas of shortage. While the intern does not serve as a teacher of record (and thus does not replace a teacher), interns do provide opportunities for more individualized approaches to teaching. Thus, an investment in internships makes sense.

According to the Teacher Education Policy, graduates completing enhanced student teaching should be supported during their first year of teaching by a mentor in a beginning teacher program. While this aspect of the policy has not been implemented systematically, a few local school systems, such as Johnson City and Shelby County, have developed strong support programs for beginning teachers.

Recommendation

The Board and Advisory Council should examine the success stories regarding the internship experience and find systematic evidence which would assist other institutions and local school systems to use internships as part of their induction experience for teacher candidates. The Board should discuss with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation, and the State Department of Education ways to encourage institutions and local school systems to join in partnerships

to use existing and forthcoming resources (e.g. teacher loan/scholarship programs, BEP funds) to assist in meeting the financial assistance needs of teacher candidates serving at interns and the professional development support of mentor teachers and beginning teachers. A similar examination of the experience of teacher candidates who complete the enhanced student teaching experience and the beginning teacher program should occur as part of the 1996-97 analysis of the Teacher Education Policy.

5. **Waivers and Permits**

The elimination of certification waivers and permits should be a goal of the state and of local school systems.

Current Status

This principle was included to ensure that the increase in standards for admission to, and completion of, teacher education programs did not result in a decrease in the supply of fully qualified teacher education graduates. While this appeared to be a legitimate concern, a shortage did not materialize. As standards have increased, and as the quality and status of teacher education programs has risen on the campuses, the number and quality of teacher education applicants and graduates has increased. The number of teacher education graduates increased 30.3% from 2,196 in 1986-87 to 2,862 in 1991-92. Moreover, the quality of the preparation of those graduates, particularly those receiving their teacher training at the post baccalaureate level, has steadily increased.

The number of waivers granted each year to teachers who are teaching outside their field of endorsement declined from 469 in 1986-87 to 413 in 1991-92. Waivers in special education account for half of the total. The number of permits issued to school systems for persons who are not trained as teachers declined from 161 to 114 during the same period.

The number of teachers teaching with an Interim Probationary A License is another indicator of teachers teaching with less than full credentials. These teachers are qualified in their subject area but lack a full teacher education program. In 1988-89 there were 318 such teachers; of these, 127 were elementary teachers. In July 1993, the Board adopted a rule change deleting elementary education and adding speech/language to the list of eligible endorsements under the Interim Probationary A License. The new rule also requires such teachers to have a mentor for two years.

The alternative preparation for licensure program developed by the Advisory Council is now in its second year. Only a small number of candidates have enrolled in two institutions approved to offer teacher education through an alternative preparation route - LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis, and the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Recommendation

Tennessee does not have a teacher shortage. There are a number of well prepared graduates who can not find jobs. A jobs registry, operated on a voluntary participation basis, would assist superintendents in finding well qualified teachers and assist teachers in finding jobs in Tennessee. The Tennessee School Boards Association is developing a jobs registry. The Board should support this effort.

6. **Program Approval**

State approval of teacher education programs will be based, in part, on the performance of graduates on written assessments and in the classroom and will be accorded only to programs which are accredited by the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education or which demonstrate comparable standards.

Current Status

Program approval procedures developed by the Advisory Council and approved by the Board require all teacher education programs to meet NCATE standards, whether they are approved by NCATE or by a comparable state process. In addition to the teacher education unit approval by NCATE or the state, individual teaching speciality programs (e.g., elementary education, mathematics) are reviewed by a team of state examiners. This process is being implemented on schedule. So far 15 institutions have been visited. Some teacher preparation programs at these institutions have been approved, some have been approved with stipulations, and some have not been approved.

NCATE has distributed the final draft of a new document, "Conditions and Procedures for State/NCATE Partnerships." It contains the criteria for NCATE's new partnership framework offering states several partnership options, including one which links performance-based licensing with professional accreditation. When our current agreement expires in Fall 1994, some revisions in Tennessee's agreement with NCATE may be required.

In addition, NCATE is in the process of revising its accreditation standards. The draft standards clarify previous standards and achieve consistency with the INTASC draft standards regarding knowledge and skills needed by beginning teachers. (See additional discussion under principle #3.) If changes are made in NCATE procedures or standards, institutions seeking NCATE accreditation and/or state approval will need to comply when they seek reaccreditation.

Teacher education graduates are required to complete written assessments prior to licensure. The NTE core battery and specialty tests currently being used will be replaced by the Praxis II series developed by the Educational Testing Service. (See additional discussion under principle #7.)

The most difficult part of the principle to implement has been assessment of the performance of graduates in the classroom. The policy envisioned using the results from the principal's evaluation of beginning teachers under the State Model for Local Evaluation. If information could be fed back to institutions on how their graduates are doing in the classroom, institutions could use this information to improve their programs. However, there are two problems. Performance information can not be released with any information identifying the individual. Second, there is some question whether the state model adequately accounts for the breadth of instructional strategies we wish teachers to employ. (See additional discussion under principle #8.)

The Center of Excellence for Research in Educational Policy at Memphis State University developed a survey for Tennessee institutions to use in surveying their graduates regarding job placement and the graduates' opinions regarding the adequacy of their teacher preparation experience. On the whole, the initial responses from the first survey were positive and instructive.

One possibility for assessing classroom performance could be to use Praxis III developed by ETS. (See additional discussion under principle #8.)

Recommendation

The Advisory Council should monitor and evaluate proposed changes in NCATE accreditation procedures and standards and consider adjustments to the state policy and procedures as needed. In addition, the state should consider ways in which assessment of performance of graduates in the classroom during their initial years of teaching can be improved and can be linked to teacher education program approval.

7. **Assessment of Teacher Candidates**

The state will administer a comprehensive testing program as a means of ensuring that candidates for teacher certification have basic knowledge of pedagogy and subjects to be taught.

Current Status

Prior to admission to programs of teacher education, candidates must complete Praxis I Academic Skills Assessments, which assess skills in mathematics, reading and writing. This assessment is available in two formats: The Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST), a paper and pencil test administered seven times a year, or a Computer Based Academic Skills Assessment, which can be scheduled at the candidate's convenience.

Teacher education graduates are currently required to submit passing scores on the NTE Core Battery, an examination of communication skills, general knowledge, and professional knowledge as a condition for licensure. In addition, speciality tests are administered by ETS in almost all teaching specialty areas: some are ETS tests and some were developed by Tennessee or a consortium of states. Graduates must also submit passing scores on these tests.

The NTE Core Battery and 14 specialty tests will be replaced by the Praxis II series developed by ETS. The state is currently convening groups of higher education and K-12 personnel to review the tests and determine their appropriateness for use in Tennessee. The new tests will include both multiple choice and constructed response (essay) modules. Based upon Board approval, some tests will become effective September 1, 1995 and others the following year.

Recommendation

The state should continue its review and consideration of the Praxis II series and should make information about the tests available to institutions of higher education.

8. **Local System Evaluation of Beginning Teachers**

Local school systems must be responsible for evaluation of teachers during the probationary years in accordance with state guidelines which will be updated based upon experience and research.

Current Status

Teachers are currently evaluated during the probationary years by principals using the State Model for Local Evaluation or an evaluation system locally developed and approved by the State Board of Education. The state model was last revised in 1988. The perception of educators is that the model is best suited for evaluating lessons taught by direct instruction but is less well suited for evaluating the active learning strategies current state policies and teacher education institutions are trying to promote. In addition, the Education Improvement Act (EIA) requires the Board to provide guidelines to local school systems for the use of student outcomes, as measured by value-added assessment, in teacher evaluation.

Recommendation

The Board should review and revise local evaluation guidelines taking into account research, emerging national models for teacher evaluation, the need for multiple methods of teaching, and the requirements of the EIA.

9. **Research and Inquiry to Improve Teaching, Teacher Education, and School Leadership**

Institutions of higher education should continue research and inquiry into the improvement of teaching, teacher education, and school leadership.

Current Status

Some of Tennessee's institutions of higher education are engaged in systematic research related to improving teaching, teacher education, and school leadership. Many institutions are engaged in various forms of inquiry to improve their preparation programs. To improve the preparation of teachers, several institutions are trying new ways of collaborating with schools. These institutions are developing professional development schools or clinical schools in which there is a true partnership between the schools and higher education. These institutions have taken seriously the ideas of the Holmes Group and the ideas of researchers such as John Goodlad who suggest that the way to reform teacher education is to simultaneously reform schooling, school by school. Much more of this effort to form partnerships needs to go on.

Institutions are contributing to the improvement of school leadership by implementing the new Policy for the Principal in Tennessee Schools with its focus on school-based decision making and the principal's role in fostering professional development. With the gradual increase in school-based decision making across the state, it is apparent that teachers need leadership skills and principals need enhanced knowledge about teaching and learning as well as improved leadership and management skills. Greater collaboration between institutions of higher education programs and local school systems and between faculty in departments of teaching and learning and in departments of educational leadership would further this objective.

Recommendation

The Board, the State Department of Education and the Tennessee Association of Colleges of Teacher Education should continue to expand the transfer of information about innovative and successful practices in teaching and learning and in teacher and school leader preparation. This information should be used to enhance both pre-service education and school level professional development.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To determine changes in course taking, the Board should ask the Southern Regional Education Board to do a follow up study, similar to that undertaken in the early 80s, analyzing the transcripts of prospective teachers. In addition, the Board should request the Tennessee Board of Regents, the University of Tennessee, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, and the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities to review teacher preparation programs regarding course taking patterns and academic majors.

2. The Advisory Council should periodically review the endorsement standards of various teaching subject areas to make sure they are consistent with new or emerging national standards.

3. The annual faculty involvement report submitted by each institution should emphasize collaborative activities with schools; institutions and schools should be encouraged to form partnerships for the preparation of teachers. Additionally, the Advisory Council should review the knowledge and skills in the professional education core to determine consistency with emerging national standards.

4. The Board and Advisory Council should examine the success stories regarding the internship experience and find systematic evidence which would assist other institutions and local school systems to use internships as part of their induction experience for teacher candidates. The Board should discuss with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation, and the State Department of Education ways to encourage institutions and local school systems to join in partnerships to use existing and forthcoming resources (e.g. teacher loan/scholarship programs, BEP funds) to assist in meeting the financial assistance needs of teacher candidates serving as interns and the professional development support of mentor teachers and beginning teachers. A similar examination of the experience of teacher candidates who complete the enhanced student teaching experience and the beginning teacher program should occur as part of the 1996-97 analysis of the Teacher Education Policy.

5. Tennessee does not have a teacher shortage. There are a number of well prepared graduates who can not find jobs. A jobs registry, operated on a voluntary participation basis, would assist superintendents in finding well qualified teachers and assist teachers in finding jobs in Tennessee. The Tennessee School Boards Association is developing a jobs registry. The Board should support this effort.

6. The Advisory Council should monitor and evaluate proposed changes in NCATE accreditation procedures and standards and consider adjustments to the state policy and procedures as needed. In addition, the state should consider ways in which assessment of performance of graduates in the classroom during their initial years of teaching can be improved and can be linked to teacher education program approval.

7. The state should continue its review and consideration of the Praxis II series and should make information about the tests available to institutions of higher education.

8. The Board should review and revise local evaluation guidelines taking into account research, emerging national models for teacher evaluation, the need for multiple methods of teaching, and the requirements of the EIA.

9. The Board, the State Department of Education and the Tennessee Association of Colleges of Teacher Education should continue to expand the transfer of information about innovative and successful practices in teaching and learning and in teacher and school leader preparation. This information should be used to enhance both pre-service education and school level professional development.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON TEACHER EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION

1. Determine the congruence between Tennessee's current knowledge and skills requirements for beginning teachers and the evolving national consensus. (Principles 2 and 3)

2. Focus on internships to improve induction of new teachers, professional development and restructuring of schools. Provide a model and support for mentoring. Promote internships through discussion and guidance to institutions and local school systems on how to use existing resources. (Principle 4)

3. Assess the impact of the value added assessment system on willingness of teachers and schools to accept interns and student teachers. (Principle 4)

4. Enhance the collaboration between institutions and schools. Promote local school system involvement. Reorient the annual faculty involvement report to focus on collaboration and partnerships to enhance school improvement initiatives. (Principle 3)

5. Develop performance assessment of candidates from admission to teacher education through beginning teaching. Determine how local teacher evaluation ties into teacher education and professional development. (Principles 6, 7 and 8)

6. Ensure that the Professional Development Policy is implemented by local schools and school systems. (Principle 9)

7. Review requirements for licensure renewal. Determine whether current requirements meet professional development needs. (Principle 9)

8. Study implementation issues related to additional endorsements; explore assessment center concept for reviewing applicants and designing programs. (Principle 2)

9. Secure funding to support teacher education and professional development. In order for the Basic Education Program (BEP) to work, Tennessee must invest in its workforce through pre-service education and ongoing professional development. Determine how portions of existing and forthcoming state resources can be directed to this investment. (Principles 4 and 9)

10. Promote modeling of effective instruction (e.g., active learning, cooperative learning, hands-on learning, team projects, interdisciplinary teaching) by higher education faculty. (Principle 3)

11. Develop a plan for a comprehensive analysis of the Teacher Education Policy in 1996-97. (Principles 4, 6 and 9)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Advisory Council on Teacher Education and Certification 1993-94

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